

Image Galleries

The Romantic Period 1785–1832



Sir Brooke Boothby, Joseph Wright of Derby, 1781

Many details combine here to portray Boothby, a Derbyshire landowner and intellectual, as a progressive man of his times: the soberly colored wool suit, one cuff casually unbuttoned, that he wears instead of the bright silks of court dress; the fact that he

has taken philosophical contemplation outdoors, into an untamed woodland scene. Boothby's left hand caresses a book by Jean—Jacques Rousseau, the French philosopher whom Boothby had recently edited: the portrait seems an endorsement of Rousseau's argument for a return to nature. Offsetting Boothby's modern guise, in the reclining attitude Wright has chosen for his depiction there is a recollection of statuary depicting classical river gods.

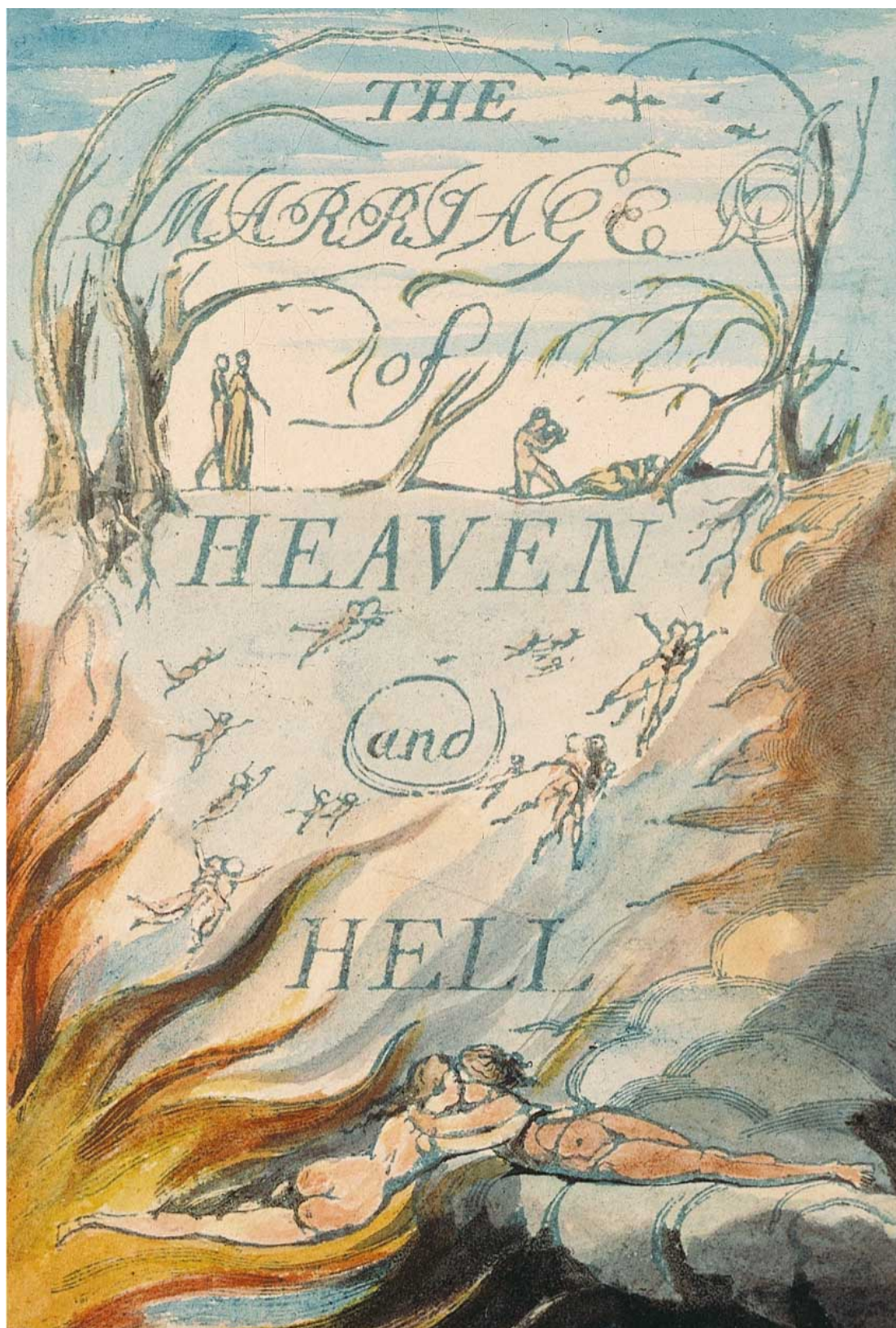


Plate 1, Copy D, of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, William Blake, 1790–93

This title page of a work composed in the early years of the French Revolution (p. 149) juxtaposes lighthearted activities (birds and humans soaring, strolling, playing music, dancing, embracing) with bleak and ominous surroundings (the leaflessness of the trees, the intensity of the flames). The larger reclining figures at the bottom of the page, sexy but genderless, are usually read as a devil and an angel whose embrace symbolizes the union (“marriage”) of contraries running throughout the work.

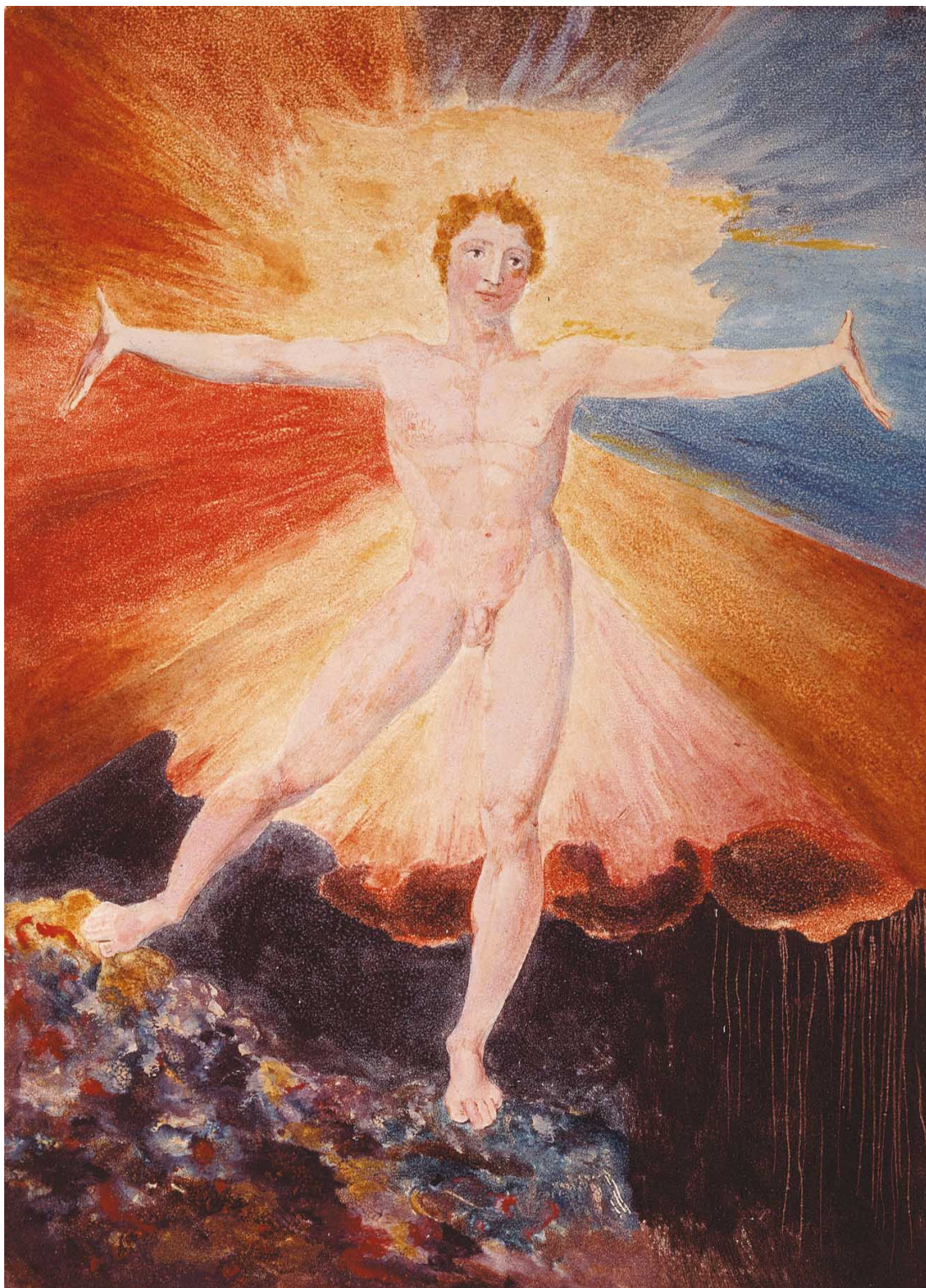


The SICK ROSE

O Rose, thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy;
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The Sick Rose, William Blake, 1794

Blake's "illumination" (plate 39, copy C, of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*; see p. 134) further complicates an already highly ambiguous poetic text. In the picture are two worms—one eating a leaf in the upper left corner, the other coming out of the fallen blossom at the bottom—and three female figures, two of which, situated on the thorny stems above the engraved text, appear to be in postures of despair. The third female figure, emerging from the blossom, has arms flung forward in an expression of either ecstasy or terror.



Glad Day, or The Dance of Albion, William Blake, ca. 1793

Blake kept returning to this image of liberation. He first designed it in 1780, shortly after finishing his apprenticeship as an engraver, when the vision of a rising sun and a radiant human body may have expressed his own youthful sense of freedom. But later, in an age of revolution, he identified the figure as Albion —“Albion rose from where he laboured at the Mill with Slaves.” For Blake the giant Albion represents the ancient form of Britain, a universal man who has fallen on evil, repressive times but is destined to awake and unite all people in a dance of liberty, both political and spiritual. Eventually, in *Jerusalem* (ca. 1820), Blake’s last great prophetic work, the figure of Albion merged with Jesus, risen from the tomb as an embodiment of “the human form divine”—immortal and perpetually creative.



Interior of Tintern Abbey, J. M. W. Turner, 1794

Turner painted this watercolor at the age of nineteen, a year after Wordsworth made his first visit to the abbey (1793) and four

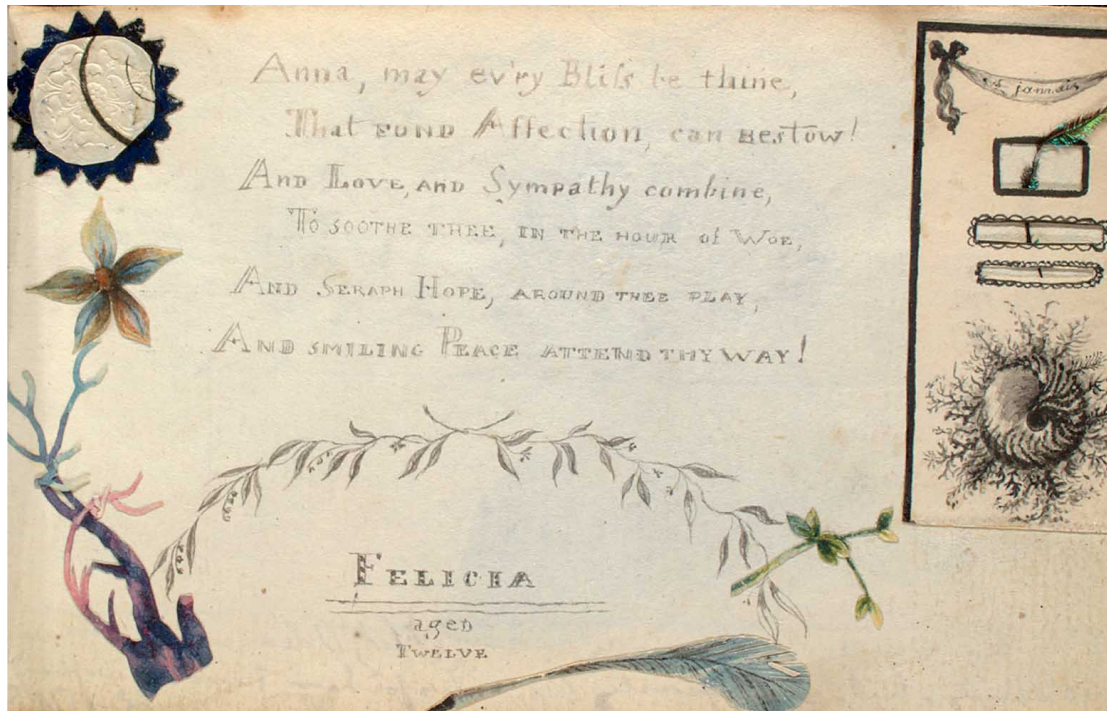
years before the poet returned for a second visit (1798), as recorded in the famous "Lines" pondering the changes that have taken place in both the speaker and the scene (p. 333). In Turner's version—as, in a different way, in Wordsworth's—the ruined symbol of religion, towering above two tiny human figures, presumably tourists, in the lower left, is in the process of being taken over (allegorically superseded) by the more powerful force of nature.



Lord Byron, Thomas Phillips, 1835 (after an original of 1813)

Garbed theatrically in an Albanian soldier's dress that he had purchased while on his travels, Byron appears in this portrait as one of his own exotic heroes. The profits from his "Eastern" tales *Lara* and *The Corsair* in fact helped pay for the portrait, which Byron commissioned in 1813, choosing to be pictured not as a

member of the British establishment but as an outsider. The archives of London's National Portrait Gallery record more than forty portraits of Byron done during his lifetime, as well as a waxwork model from life made by Madame Tussaud in 1816: a statistic that suggests the poet's keen awareness of the magnetism and marketability of his image.



Page from an album of Anne Wagner, ca. 1795–1834

It was fashionable in the nineteenth century for middle-class and well-to-do women to own "albums," blank books in which friends and relatives could leave drawings, inscribe quoted or original verse, or paste in collages and cut-outs. On this page from an album kept by Anne Wagner, daughter of a Liverpool wine merchant, beginning in 1795, the poem and the delicate artwork are by Wagner's niece, Felicia Browne, "aged twelve," who would go on to literary fame under her married name, Felicia Hemans (see pp. 898–99). The writing is ornamented and carefully

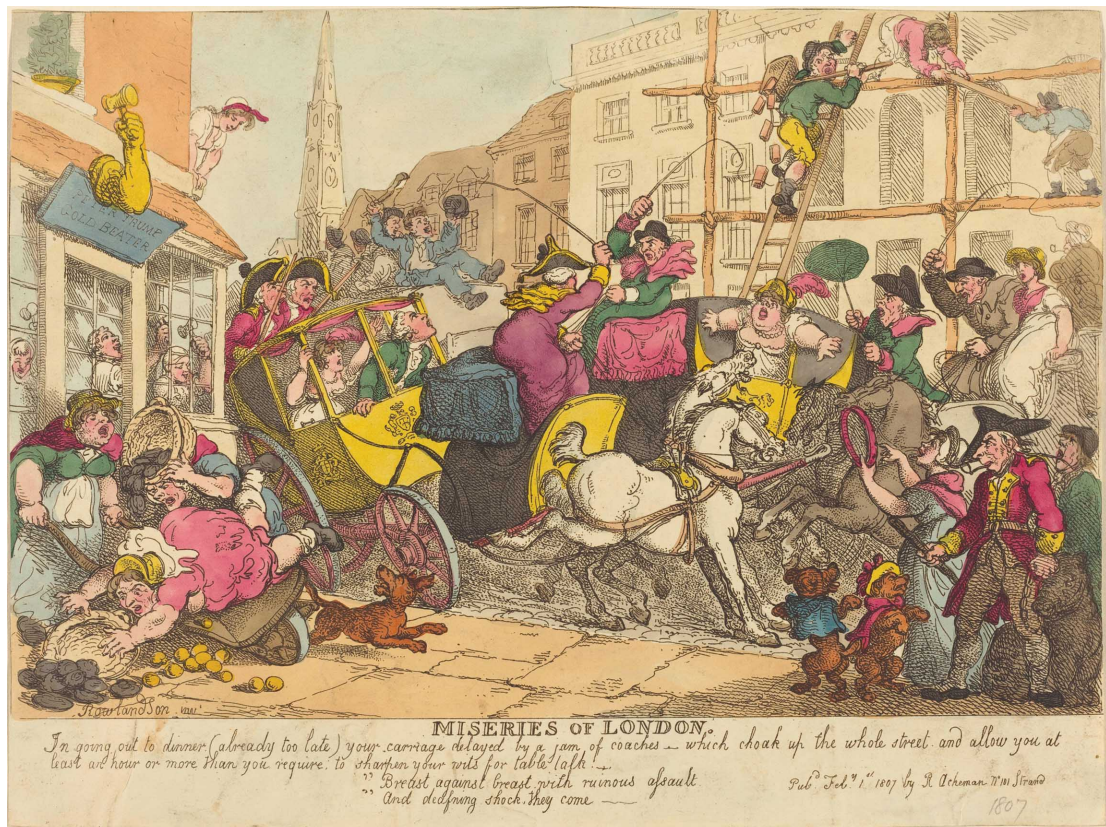
lettered on the tiny page in imitation of a printed book (the album measures just 8.5 by 12 cm).



The Sleep of Endymion, Anne-Louis Girodet, 1791

For this otherworldly love scene, the French painter Girodet draws on Greek mythology's legends of the love the goddess of the moon bore for a mortal, the shepherd Endymion, whom she visited while he slept. Girodet adds to the story a figure sometimes identified as Eros, sometimes as Zephyr, the personification of the breeze, who is shown on the left half-smiling as he parts the surrounding foliage, the better to enable the moonbeams to embrace the sleeper. The unconscious Endymion is, by contrast, a gorgeously passive figure, though he does appear to stir in his sleep (dreaming perhaps) and turn his face toward the silvery light. In some versions of the legend, the goddess arranges for Endymion to sleep eternally, preserving his

physical perfection and making him immortal. "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever": in 1818, in his first long poem, which opens with this line, John Keats would also represent Endymion's story and, like Girodet, use it to think about pleasure, love, dream, arrested time, and their relations (pp. 947–51).



Miseries of London, Thomas Rowlandson, printed by R. Ackerman, 1807

Evoking the potential for danger and disorder associated with the busy metropolis in the Romantic period—and reveling in the exciting spectacle of the city street—this lavishly jumbled scene of “road rage” in a London traffic jam was one of cartoonist Thomas Rowlandson’s illustrations for James Beresford’s popular satire on modern manners and fashions, *The Miseries of Human Life; or The Last Groans of Timothy Testy and Samuel Sensitive*, first published in 1806 and then frequently reprinted. Crowded into

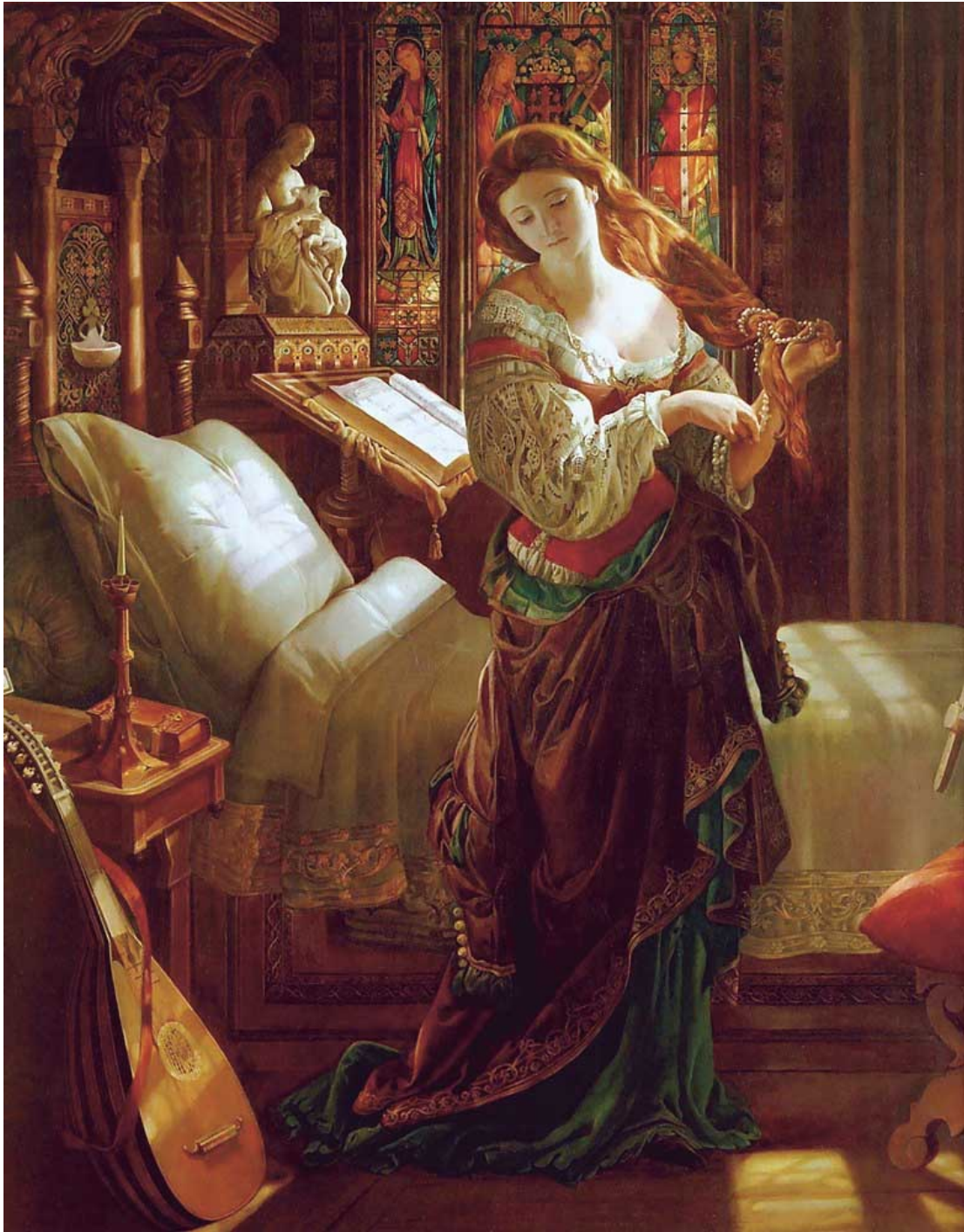
the image are a number of distinct social groups, from elegant carriage riders to street performers accompanied by costumed animals. The physical chaos ricochets across social and even species divisions, as horses collide, women with market baskets go tumbling, and a hapless construction worker accidentally rains bricks from above. The quotation at the bottom of the print ("Breast against breast with ruinous assault / And deafening shock they come") is jokingly taken from a description of heroic battle in Virgil's epic *The Aeneid* (11.613–15).



The Nightmare, Henry Fuseli, ca. 1783–91

The first version of this painting created a sensation when the Swiss-born artist Fuseli exhibited it at London's Royal Academy in 1781. Even Horace Walpole, who had used his own nightmare of "a gigantic hand in armour" when composing his Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto* (p. 292), found Fuseli's trademark blend of

violence, eroticism, and the irrational excessively disturbing: “shockingly mad, madder than ever; quite mad” was Walpole’s verdict on the witchcraft scene that Fuseli exhibited four years later. It is no surprise to learn that during the 1920s Sigmund Freud kept an engraving of *The Nightmare* on display.



Madeline After Prayer, Daniel Maclise, 1868

Closely attending to Keats's words, Maclise pictures the moment when, "her vespers done," Madeline, the heroine of *The Eve of Saint Agnes*, frees her hair "of all its wreathed pearls," illuminated

all the while by the moonlight shining through the window that Keats had described in detail. Missing from the image is Porphyro, who in the poem spies on this scene of disrobing from his hiding place in Madeline's closet. Maclise is one of many nineteenth-century painters who took inspiration from the sumptuous sensory detail of Keats's romance (pp. 953–63).



Disappointed Love, Francis Danby, 1821

In this, the first work he exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Anglo-Irish, Bristol-based painter Francis Danby adopted an unprecedented approach to the combination of figure and landscape that was increasingly central to nineteenth-century painting. *Disappointed Love* owes its power to its fusion of the general and the particularized. The depiction of the young woman, her face and individuality concealed from the viewer,

allies her with allegorical representations of melancholy, mourning figures placed atop mortuary monuments, or even some of the female figures in Blake's illuminated books. The scene in which she is placed, by contrast, based on Danby's study of scenery along the River Frome on Bristol's outskirts, is rendered in minute, naturalistic detail. He depicts the plants around her with a botanist's eye.

The Victorian Age

1830–1901





Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhoon Coming On), J. M. W. Turner, 1840

The subject of Turner's painting is the infamous Zong massacre of 1781 in which more than one hundred and thirty enslaved people were thrown overboard by the crew of the British slave ship (detail at left). When the ship ran low on water, the captain

decided to murder the enslaved cargo in order to collect insurance on their lives—a decision ultimately deemed legal by a British court of law. In this painting, Turner uses this horrifying incident as the occasion for the apocalyptic use of light and color. John Ruskin owned this painting for several years, but he eventually sold it, finding the subject “too painful to live with.” He praises it at length in *Modern Painters* (p. 466).



Ophelia, Sir John Everett Millais, 1851–52

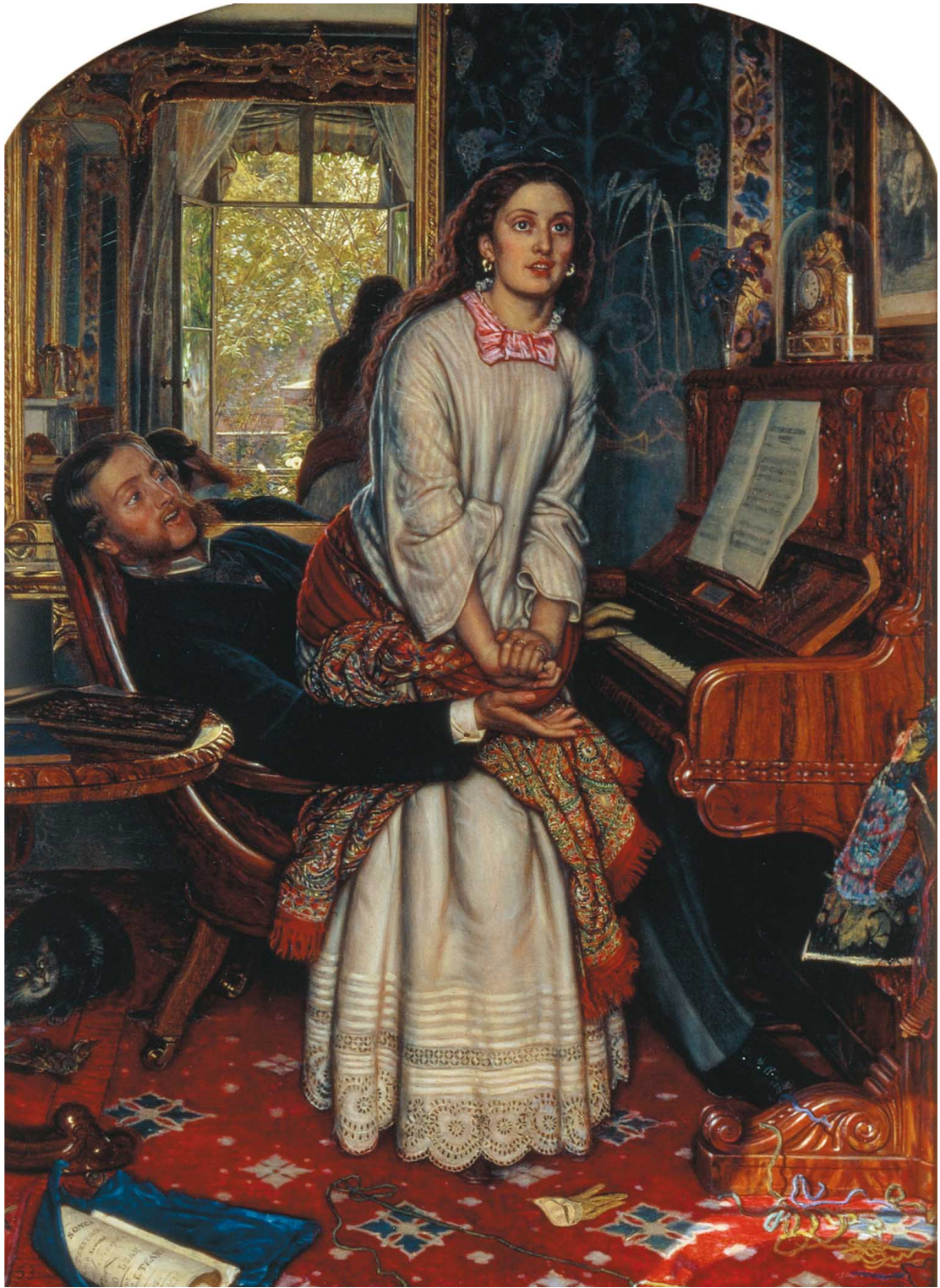
Millais’ famous painting of Shakespeare’s heroine depicts Ophelia as she drifts to her death after being driven mad by her lover Hamlet’s murder of her father. When the work was first exhibited at the Royal Academy, some viewers objected to the ordinariness of the surroundings. As Millais’ friend John Ruskin asked the painter, “Why the mischief should you not paint pure nature, and not that rascally wirefenced garden-rolled- nursery- maid’s paradise?” More recently, the painting has come to be regarded

as one of the great masterpieces of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (pp. 606–15).



Work, Ford Madox Brown, 1852, 1856–63

Brown's painting constructs a comprehensive picture of Victorian society through the relationships of various classes of the population to work. The excavators at the center represent work in its essential, physical form: the leisured gentry on horseback at the top of the painting have no need to work; the ragged girl in the foreground cares for her orphaned brothers and sisters. Under the trees are vagrants and distressed haymakers. Thomas Carlyle and F. D. Maurice, "brain workers" whose social ideas influenced the painting, stand on the right.



The Awakening Conscience, William Holman Hunt, 1853–54

As John Ruskin's letter to the *Times* (p. 609) points out, every detail of Hunt's painting of a fallen woman, hearing the voice of conscience while in the arms of her lover, has symbolic resonance—the soiled glove on the carpet, the bird that has escaped the cat, the songs on the piano ("Oft in the Stilly Night") and on the floor ("Tears, Idle Tears"), the window through which the woman gazes, reflected in the mirror behind the couple. Like Millais' *Ophelia*, the painting surrounds and interprets its subject with a crowded canvas of discrete, photographically rendered objects.



Soul's Beauty, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1864–70

Also titled *Sibylla Palmifera* (the palm-bearing sibyl), *Soul's Beauty* represents the unattainable ideal that inspires the artist. Painted as a companion to the sonnet of the same name, the picture strives to represent and evoke the erotic and aesthetic absorption the poem allegorizes. Rossetti devoted the last fifteen years of his painting career to these looming frontal portraits with

richly decorated backgrounds, the details of which carry symbolic significance (in this painting, the arch of life, the cupid, the poppies, the skull, the butterflies).



Body's Beauty, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1864–73

Also titled *Lady Lilith* (after Adam's first wife, who ran away to become a witch), *Body's Beauty* represents sensual absorption. Paired with the sonnet of the same name, the painting associates the sexual allure of the woman at the center with the golden hair that represents her value, and her narcissistic contemplation of herself with the art that she embodies. Like the Lady of Shalott, Lady Lilith is a weaver, but a deadly one—the poppies and roses surrounding her link death and sexuality.



Alice Liddell as "The Beggar-Child," Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, 1858

Dodgson is best known to us as "Lewis Carroll," the author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1871), but he was also for many years a keen and prolific champion of photography, a new art form in the Victorian era. Alice, the six-year-old girl in this haunting image and the inspiration for those two famous books, was the daughter of Dean Liddell, the principal of Christ Church, Oxford, where Dodgson taught mathematics. The picture was first published in *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll* in 1898, but had been shown by Dodgson to select individuals much earlier; Tennyson apparently considered it "the most beautiful photograph" he had ever seen.



The Passing of Arthur, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1875

Using photography in the way that earlier artists had used engravings to illustrate literary texts, Cameron produced a set of tableaux vivants for Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, posing family and friends in costume, in a combination of reality and fantasy that recalls the Pre-Raphaelites. This photograph illustrates a

scene from *The Passing of Arthur*, where the three queens attend the dying king in the barge that takes him to Avalon.



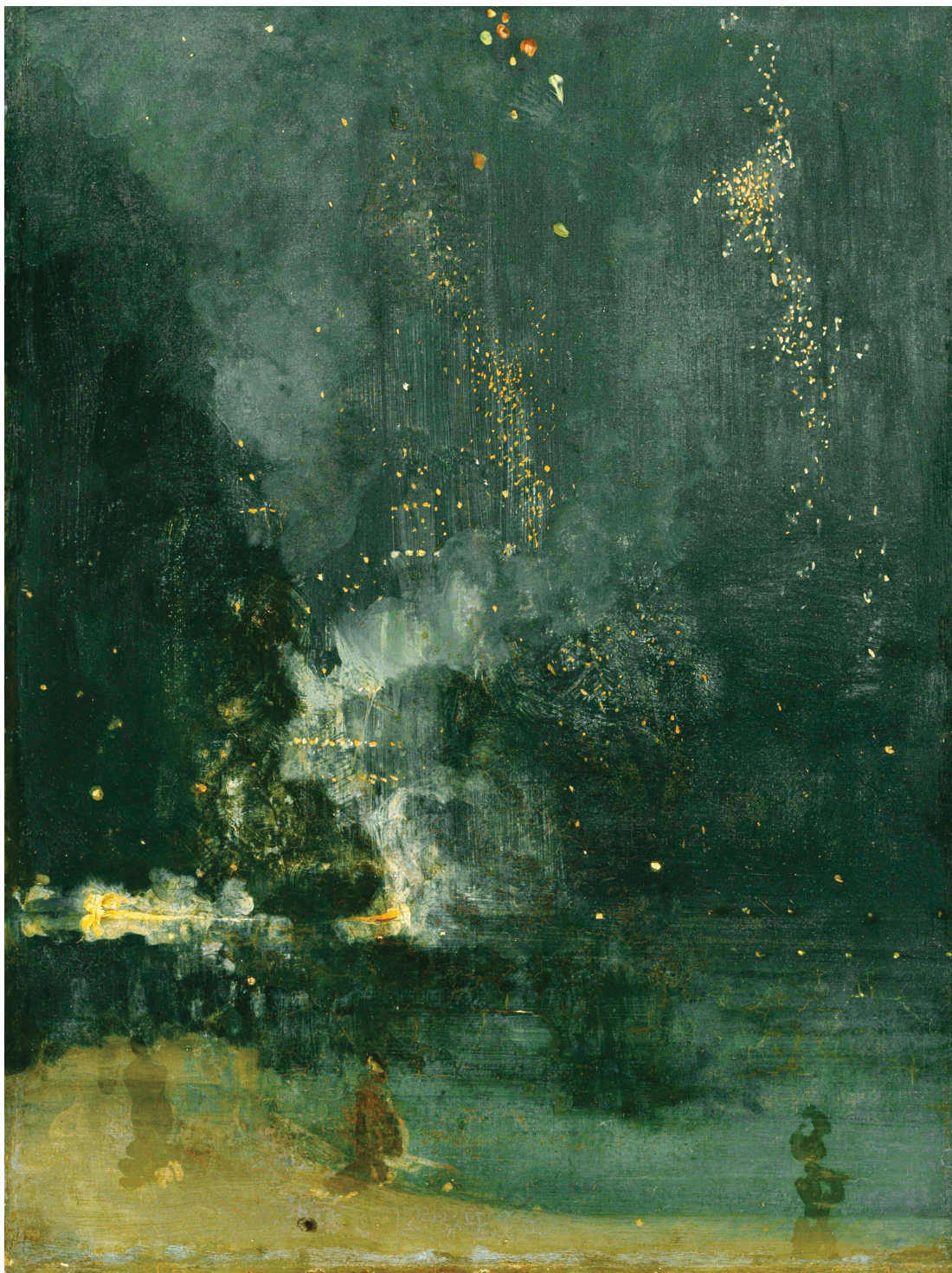
The Roll Call, Elizabeth Butler, 1874

When *The Roll Call* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1874, it made its artist, Lady Elizabeth Southerden Thompson Butler, instantly famous. Its depiction of suffering British soldiers reinforced popular demand for reform in the wake of the disastrous Crimean War (1854–56), which many saw as having been lost due to administrative incompetence.



The Defence of Rorke's Drift, Elizabeth Butler, 1880

The Defence of Rorke's Drift depicts a battle in the Anglo-Zulu War in South Africa in 1879. "Rorke's Drift," a farm turned field hospital, was defended by 141 British soldiers against an attack by about four thousand Zulu warriors. This painting is much more celebratory of British warrior culture than *The Roll Call*.



Nocturne in Black and Gold, the Falling Rocket, James A. M. Whistler, 1875

Whistler's impressionist painting of fireworks approaches the abstraction suggested in his title. He emphatically rejected the precise depiction of objects in earlier Victorian painting. When the critic John Ruskin saw the painting in Grosvenor Gallery, he wrote in *Fors Clavigera* that he "never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." Whistler sued Ruskin for libel and won; but he was awarded damages of only one farthing, and the trial left him financially ruined.

The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

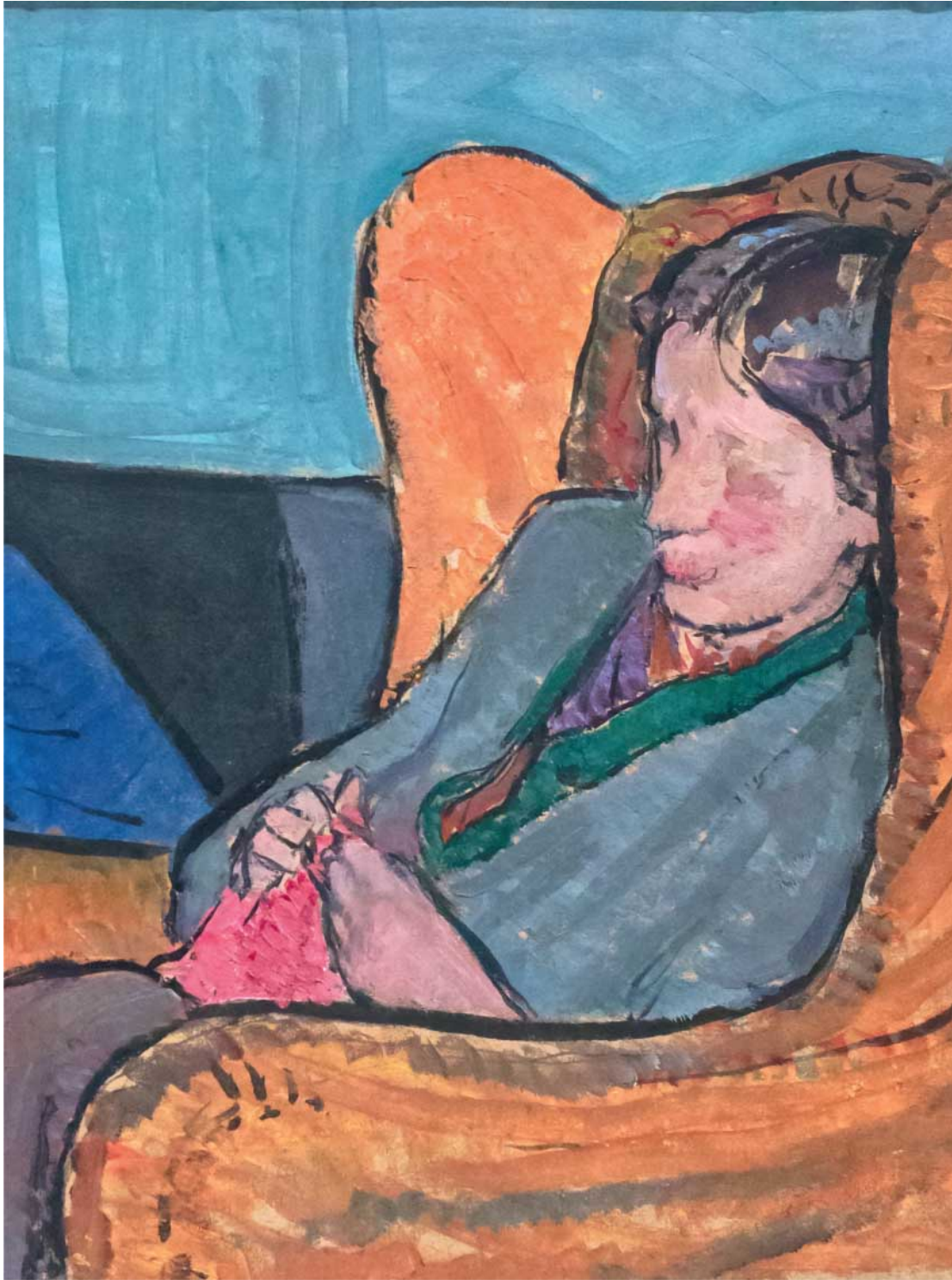


Les Femmes d'Alger (O.K.), Pablo Picasso, Paris, June–July 1935

Oil on canvas, 8' x 7' 8" (243.9 x 233.7 cm). Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights

Society (ARS), New York. Location: The Museum of Modern Art/New York, NY/USA.

This masterpiece by Spanish expatriate Picasso helped unleash the experimental energies of modern art. The painting breaks with formal traditions of one-point perspective and human modeling, violently fracturing space in jagged planes. At the same time, it defies conventions of sexual decorum in the visual arts, confronting the viewer with five naked sex workers in a brothel. The masklike faces, particularly of the women to the right, echo African art; they suggest the crucial role non-Western art will play in the development of modernism. The abstract faces, angular forms, and formally fragmented bodies forecast the revolutionary techniques of analytic cubism that Picasso and his French collaborator Georges Braque would develop in Paris from 1907 to 1914.



Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, 1912

Bell's portrait of her younger sister presents an ordinary moment in a quietly innovative way. Woolf sits in a relaxed, almost

slumped posture. The perspective of the painting, angled from the side rather than head-on, evokes a casual intimacy. However, the blurring of Woolf's features also suggests mystery, as if Bell declines to connect the exteriority of expression with the interiority of the mind. Bell's Post-Impressionist paintings, like Woolf's novels, contemplate the dissonance between outward appearance and private feeling while giving renewed attention to domestic life.



[*Portrait of a Seated Bird*], Rabindranath Tagore, ca. late 1920s

In 1913 Rabindranath Tagore became the first Asian person to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (see volume E). He sponsored an exhibition in 1922 in the city of Kolkata, which brought together the work of Bauhaus artists and Indian painters associated with the Bengali avant-garde. Tagore's painting of a

seated bird combines the distorted lines and scalar exaggerations of European abstraction with the totemic arts of Native American and Oceanic peoples. The red and yellow of the bird's body against the dark background give the impression of a dreamlike space. Tagore valued spontaneity and the subconscious in his painting, and his turn toward the surreal extended modernist traditions of representation into the visual art of India.



The Merry-Go-Round, Mark Gertler, 1916

Painted in the midst of World War I, *The Merry-Go-Round* explores the insufferable condition of life on the home front and

on the battlefields. Its circularity describes the frustration of the deadlock on the Western Front, while its mingling of automatized soldiers and women conveys the sense of psychological menace pervading civilian society. The grinning puppetlike figures and the fun-fair setting convey an atmosphere of ghastly levity, in which war becomes a game. Glaring artificial colors contribute to the impression of a violent and confined world, where even nature is mechanical.



Tube Shelter Perspective, Henry Moore, 1941

Moore, a globally renowned sculptor, took up sketching during World War I because of the scarcity of sculpting material. This work, created with pen, chalk, watercolor, and gouache, offers his impressions of crowds sheltering in the London Underground during a World War II air raid. The people, arranged in parallel lines down a seemingly endless tunnel, resemble mummies or skeletons, blurring the lines between a bomb shelter and a mass grave. Despite the underworld atmosphere, Moore's subjects are absolutely alive. Forced into proximity, yet still isolated and anonymous, their claustrophobic depiction yields an involuntary kind of intimacy. *Tube Shelter Perspective* is one of a series of drawings that made Moore into a major artist of the British wartime effort. His work bears witness to the endurance and fortitude of everyday people.

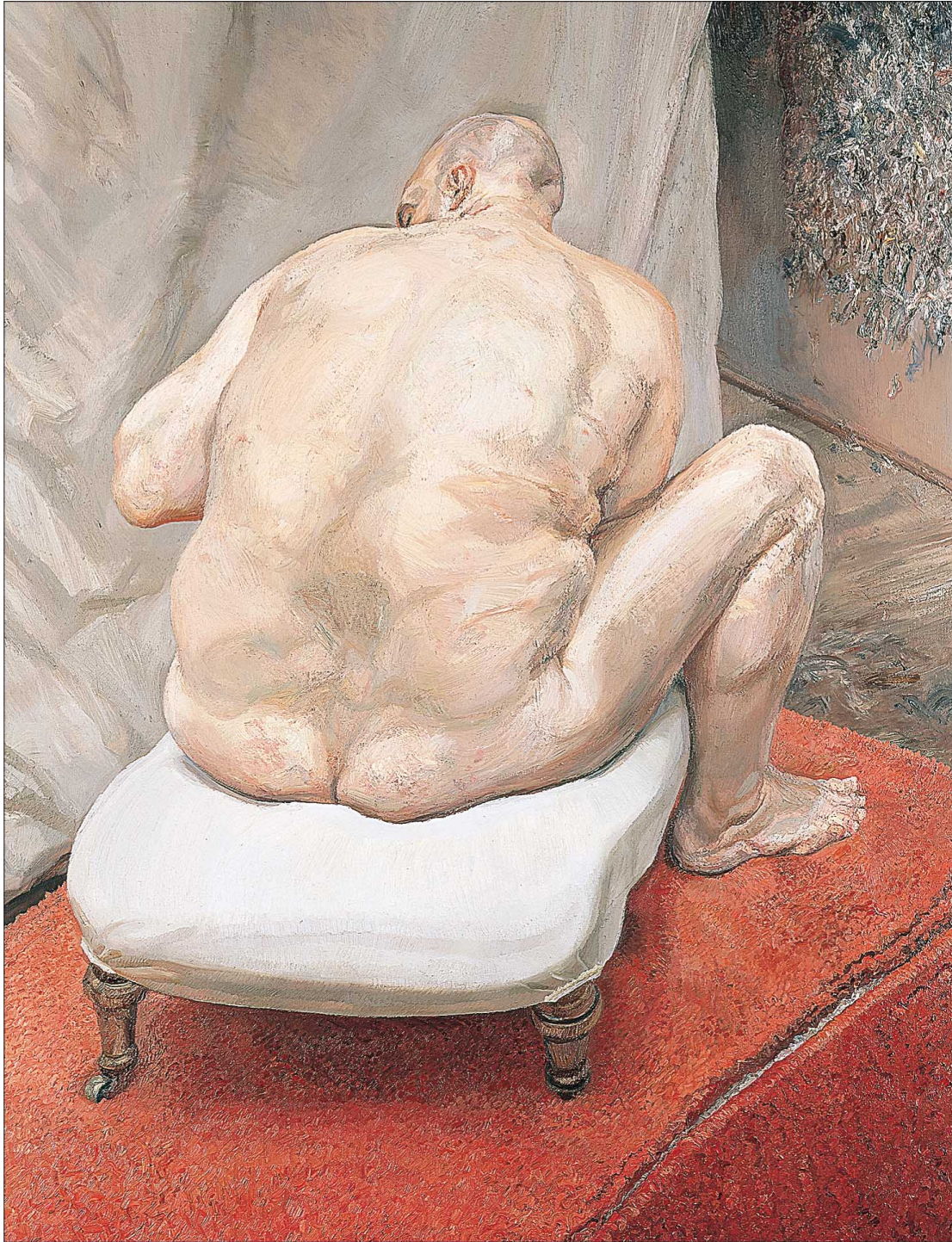


Painting, Francis Bacon, 1946

Oil and pastel on linen, 6' 5 7/8" × 52" (197.8 × 132.1 cm).

Purchase. Artist: Francis Bacon (1909–1992), ARS, NY. Location: The Museum of Modern Art/New York, NY/USA.

Bacon's nightmarish association of the slaughterhouse with the emblems of political and religious power conjures both the suffering and the hypocrisy of the twentieth century. The bust of a man, his face overshadowed by an open umbrella, surrounded by microphones, the whole superimposed upon a butcher's display, evokes the discrepancy between rhetoric and means of power. While the umbrella offers a ludicrous symbol of respectability, the visual parallels between man and meat draw attention to the brutal foundations of political influence. The man's broad shoulders resemble the squared outline of the carcass behind him. The red and white of his face, and his exposed teeth, suggest the flesh and bone of the beef. Incongruous religious references, in the cruciform spread of the carcass and the churchlike decorations on the walls, augment the painting's insinuations of corruption.



Naked Man, Back View, Lucian Freud, 1993

Freud's nudes study the details of the human body with an unflinching fascination that is modern in its refusal to censor or sentimentalize. Bowery, Freud's model, was a two-hundred-pound

nightclub performer, famous for the gorgeous and outrageous costumes he used to reinvent himself in public. Yet Freud, recalling their first encounter, remembered the shape of his lower limbs rather than his outfit, observing that “his calves went right down to his feet, almost avoiding the whole business of ankles altogether.” His depiction of Bowery in the nude strongly evokes the magnificence and the vulnerability of a body better known for its sartorial transformations.



Nelson's Ship in a Bottle, Yinka Shonibare, May 24, 2010–December 31, 2011

Commissioned as a temporary addition to London's Trafalgar Square, Anglo-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare's work is a scaled replica of the ship that carried Admiral Horatio Nelson (whose statue ascends nearby) to victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805—except that Shonibare playfully corks the ship in a massive bottle and refashions the sails out of brightly colored

cloth. This textile, frequently seen in his work, is often considered authentically African. But in the cross-cultural irony he relishes, its designs were originally Indonesian, its production English and Dutch, and it was sold to West Africans. Nelson's victory enabled the British colonization of Africa but also ultimately the reverse colonization of Britain's cultural landscape by people like Shonibare, a self-described "postcolonial hybrid."



Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku, Azerbaijan, Zaha Hadid, 2012

Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid is renowned for applying her curvilinear style to structures that seem to defy gravity. The Heydar Aliyev Center, named for a former president of Azerbaijan, houses a library, museum, and concert venues. The wavelike outer structure enfolds each of these interior spaces in a continuous line as if to suggest that the written word, visual art, and music all draw inspiration from one another and thus should flow together. The shell of the Center is made from a steel space frame and glass fiber-reinforced concrete panels that conceal the

vertical supports within the walls. The interior floors sweep gently into ramps, walls, and ceilings to give the appearance of one twisting surface, like a Möbius strip. Although Hadid's shapes may seem more mathematically than culturally located, the style of the Aliyev Center signifies a break with the austere vertical structures of Soviet architecture and a nod to the curving forms of traditional Islamic architecture. The design captures the spirit of a postcolonial nation, looking beyond its Soviet past to create its own future.
